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Working Today For Michigan's Tomorrow

Jobs, Families & Education Top GOP Senate '04 Agenda

Sikkema: "Senate Republicans are going to work for what's best for Michigan's families, not what's easiest for state government"

LANSING – Senate Republicans today outlined a bold 35-point legislative agenda that focuses on creating jobs, strengthening families and continuing to improve the quality of Michigan schools while also bringing state spending in line with existing revenues.

"This is a bold and proactive caucus agenda, one based on Michigan's priorities," Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema said. "This agenda makes it clear that Senate Republicans are going to work for what's best for Michigan's families, not what's easiest for state government."

Sikkema, R-Wyoming, said another looming state budget deficit will force lawmakers to refine spending priorities for the 2005 fiscal year budget, but he is confident progress can be made on the caucus agenda nonetheless.

(M O R E)

“We have to keep moving Michigan forward and make the state more competitive for job growth and business investment,” Sikkema said. “Senate Republicans have set our goals high because Michigan’s families have lofty expectations of us.”

The 2004 Senate Republican Caucus Agenda covers a broad range of topics and priorities focused on growing the economy and creating jobs, protecting the environment, common sense land use regulations, lowering health care costs and increasing accessibility, strengthening and protecting families, reducing state spending, and continuing Senate oversight of government activities. *(A copy of the 2004 Senate Republican Caucus Agenda is attached.)*

Sikkema said the Republican Caucus will soon announce Phase II of its JOBS Action Plan to spur job growth and economic investment. Sikkema says Phase II picks up where the Republican’s nine-point JOBS Action Plan introduced in 2003 left off. The goal is to position Michigan as quickly as possible to take advantage of the growing economy happening across the nation and to seek out new economies and industries driven by Michigan’s high-tech workforce and world-class research and development resources.

“We must create Michigan’s future now,” Sikkema said. “We cannot wait, as we have in recessions passed, for an improving national economy to make its way to Michigan.”

SENATE REPUBLICAN '04 AGENDA

WORKING TODAY FOR MICHIGAN'S TOMORROW

The GOP vision for Michigan includes providing a job opportunity for anyone who wants to work and support their family. It includes a great education for every student, affordable health care for families and senior citizens, and an opportunity for every Michigan resident to choose their own path toward a brighter future. The legislative agenda laid out below focuses on preserving Michigan's precious environment, protecting Michigan's families, educating Michigan's youth, building a healthy Michigan and improving Michigan's economic competitiveness.

We are Working Today for Michigan's Tomorrow . . .

IMPROVING COMPETITIVENESS

- JOBS (Job Opportunities for Business Success)
 - Tax pause for new businesses
 - Forestry Management
- JOBS II (Announced soon)
 - More opportunities to effectively stimulate the creation and retention of Michigan jobs.
- Balance fiscal year 2005 budget
- Ensure economic growth through transportation



PROTECTING FAMILIES

- Identity Theft Package
- Lead Screening Package
- Grandparent Visitation Package
- Prize and Sweepstakes Regulation Act
- Help America Vote Act
- Day Care Savings Account
- "Scam-free zone"
- Limit passengers for young drivers
- Strengthen child support collection
- Promote parental consent
- End "video voyeurism"
- Update Charitable Organizations and Solicitations Act
- Protect minors on Sex Offender Registry
- Standardize drug courts
- Review Homeland Security



EDUCATING YOUTH

- Blue Ribbon Committee on Adult Education
- Stretch education dollars
- Promote local education reform
- Increase educational accountability
- Control tuition increases



PRESERVING MICHIGAN

- Complete Recycling Package
- Fight Ozone Non-attainment Standard
- Stop out-of-state waste
- Prevent Great Lakes chemical spills
- Pursue Land Use Report recommendations
- Assess agricultural land use
- Modernize Drain Code
- Regulate manufactured housing



BUILDING A HEALTHY MICHIGAN

- Health Savings Account
- Mental health parity
- Patients' Rights
- Mental Health Board accountability

